

RESOLUTION NO. 12-718

WHEREAS, the City Council and Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, are apprised of the passing of Mr. James A. Jones, Sr., grand patriarch of The Royal Funeral Home family, on August 8, 2012. A thanksgiving and praise service was held on Thursday, August 16, 2012, at St. Bartley Primitive Baptist Church, a celebratory service took place on Friday, August 17, 2012 at Oakwood University Seventh-day Adventist Church with Dr. William T. Gladys officiating and entombment will be at Meadowlawn Garden of Peace; and,

WHEREAS, James Adell Jones, Sr., was former owner/operator of Royal Funeral Home, Inc., the oldest African-American owned business in the City of Huntsville, Alabama. In June of 2008, many families, churches, friends and community organizations that had supported Royal Funeral Home throughout the years participated during the grand 90th Anniversary Celebration; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Jones was the only child born to the late Thomas and Clara Blackburn Jones. He was educated in the public schools of Madison County, and after serving three years in the United States Army, returned to Huntsville to prepare for his career. He received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Social Science from Alabama A&M College and pursued further graduate study at Howard University in Washington, DC. His early career found him teaching at Councill High School, Davis Hills Junior High and Grissom High School; and,

WHEREAS, although Mr. Jones' active participation in the funeral profession did not begin until 1949, he had dreams of becoming a Funeral Director as early as age eight. He started as a night attendant and janitor with the Royal Funeral Home, and in 1955, joined the staff at Frazier's Funeral Home in Washington, DC, where he became a licensed Apprentice Embalmer. In 1960, he graduated from the Atlanta College of Mortuary Science, and returned to Frazier as the Assistant Manager. He was granted licenses by the District of Columbia as a funeral director and embalmer after successfully passing the American Conference of Funeral Service Examination. Likewise, through reciprocity, he was granted both licenses from the State of Alabama Board of Funeral Service; and,

WHEREAS, in 1963, he returned to Royal Funeral Home as Funeral Director and temporary Embalmer, as well as Assistant Manager. In 1969, he and his wife Barbara purchased Royal Funeral Home, which helped fulfill his childhood dream and complemented his most humble and caring personality. His life exemplified the words, "If I can help somebody as I pass along, then my living will not be in vain;" and,

WHEREAS, in addition to the many Funeral Directors' affiliations, which included appointment by the Governor to the Alabama Funeral Directors and Morticians Association, his helping others can also be seen through his involvement with the Evening Star Lodge #6 F & A.M.,

where he served as treasurer; East Cemetery Improvement Association, where he served as president; Tennessee Valley Consistory #160; and the NAACP. You may have also felt the results of his membership in the Friends of the Family Court, the Black Business Improvement Association and the Board of Directors of the Harris Home for Children; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Jones served as a deacon at the St. Bartley Primitive Baptist Church, and he and his wife Barbara were the parents of Dr. Brenda Jones Kirkendall, Mrs. Karen Jones Smith, and Mr. James A. Jones, Jr., and the grandparents of Ashley Kirkendall and David Smith, Jr.; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. James A. Jones and Barbara Hundley Jones daughter, Mrs. Karen Jones Smith is presently the President and owner/operator of Royal Funeral Home, and her husband Mr. David Jones is vice president. Royal Funeral Home was established in 1918 by Mr. Charles K. Binford and later sold to Mr. Lawrence B. and Amanda Hundley in 1946. The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. David (Karen Jones) Smith, are third generation in the Hundley family to purchase, own and operate the business. Mr. and Mrs. James A. (Barbara) Jones, and first generation grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence B. (Amanda) Rice Hundley, made this the sixty-third year of Hundley family ownership; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. James A. Jones' service to the City of Huntsville and the public have been most efficiently executed. He materially and significantly contributed too many families while performing his duties as owner/operator of Royal Funeral Home. His leadership provided a wide spectrum of opportunities for others, as well as his family. Mr. James A. Jones and Mrs. Barbara Hundley Jones have been considered symbols of excellence in responsibility and devotion to their family; and,

WHEREAS, Royal Funeral Home's motto is, "When only memories remain, let them be beautiful." No matter how small one thinks one's life work is, he must realize that it has cosmic significance if he is serving humanity and doing the will of God.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council and Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, that we extend our sincerest appreciation to Mr. James A. Jones for his diligence and dedicated service rendered to the City of Huntsville. Many were blessed by his remarkable example, his tender dedication, his unending sacrifice and deep love for all mankind. Mr. Jones' distinguished legacy of

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service, spirit of humility, grace and remarkable example enriched many lives and transcends his earthly journey to live on in each life he touched. We extend our deepest sympathy to his family and loved ones at this time of great sadness.

ADOPTED this the 23rd day of August, 2012.

President of the City Council of the
City of Huntsville, Alabama

APPROVED this the 23rd day of August, 2012.

Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama